



Vol. 2 Issue 9

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September 2006

*Emergency
Preparedness*

CERT Weekend

Kerry Flaherty

Commissioner Notes

By James M. Thomas

September is National Preparedness Month. This past week Secretary Michael Chertoff, the Federal Director of Homeland Security (DHS), kicked off a major national campaign urging all Americans to take a few basic steps to ensure that their families are prepared before emergencies happen.

It is imperative that the planning for an emergency begin at the family level. We all know that when difficulties occur we always go back to our family roots, you have heard the phrase "Family comes first." Most of us believe that, yet we really do not take the time to prepare our family before an emergency.

The State of Connecticut, through the cooperation of the Department of Public Health and our agency have prepared the "Connecticut Guide to Emergency Preparedness." This 10 page booklet is extremely informative and gives the reader excellent information on how to prepare before an emergency, as well as to respond during an emergency.

WHAT'S NEW:

**September is
National Preparedness
Month**

UPCOMING TRAINING and EXERCISES

**Sept. 9 & 10—CERT Weekend,
Windsor Locks**

**Sept. 11-15—Terrorism
Liaison Officer—POSTC**

**Sept. 23 & 30—CERT Train the
Trainer- 2 day session**

This booklet is available through our website www.ct.gov/demhs as well as through our five regional offices. There are several other resources including the American Red Cross and DHS's Ready Government campaign. Their respective websites are www.redcross.org and www.ready.gov. The ready campaign is a national public service advertising campaign to educate and empower us to handle any emergency. They can also be reached a 1-800-BE-READY.

Take the time now to prepare a home emergency kit that will allow you and your family to have the basics for at least three (3) days. Critical is water for both drinking as well as sanitary reasons. Also, food that can be eaten without preparation or requiring utilities, as well as having a radio that has either batteries, or a newer version that allows the operator to turn the handle for power.

No matter what kind of emergency that we will have to face sometime in the future, whether it be the loss of electricity, a hurricane, flooding, snow and ice storms or an act of terrorism, the key is to have the immediate family needs being taken care of ahead of time.

In the long run we are hoping that your family kit will not have to be used, but just as we do in fire drills, we'll know what to do and how to do it. With your attention to duty and protecting your family, you will have the necessary essential items to survive on our own until additional resources are made available.

We hope you enjoy this edition of the DEMHS Advisor and find it helpful in your pursuit of Emergency Preparedness.

1. GET INFORMED

Contact your local emergency management office or local American Red Cross Chapter to gather the information you will need to create a plan.

Community Hazards

Ask about the specific hazards that threaten your community (e.g. hurricanes, tornados, and earthquakes) and about your risk from those hazards. Additionally, hazard information for your local area can be obtained at your local emergency management office.

Community Disaster Plans

Learn about community response plans, evacuation plans, and designated emergency shelters. Ask about the emergency plans and procedures that exist in places you and your family spend time such as places of employment, schools, and child care centers. If you do not own a vehicle or drive, find out in advance what your community's plans are for evacuating those without private transportation.

Community Warning Systems

Find out how local authorities will warn you of a pending disaster and how they will provide information to you during and after a disaster. Learn about NOAA Weather Radio and its alerting capabilities (www.noaa.gov).



2. MAKE A PLAN

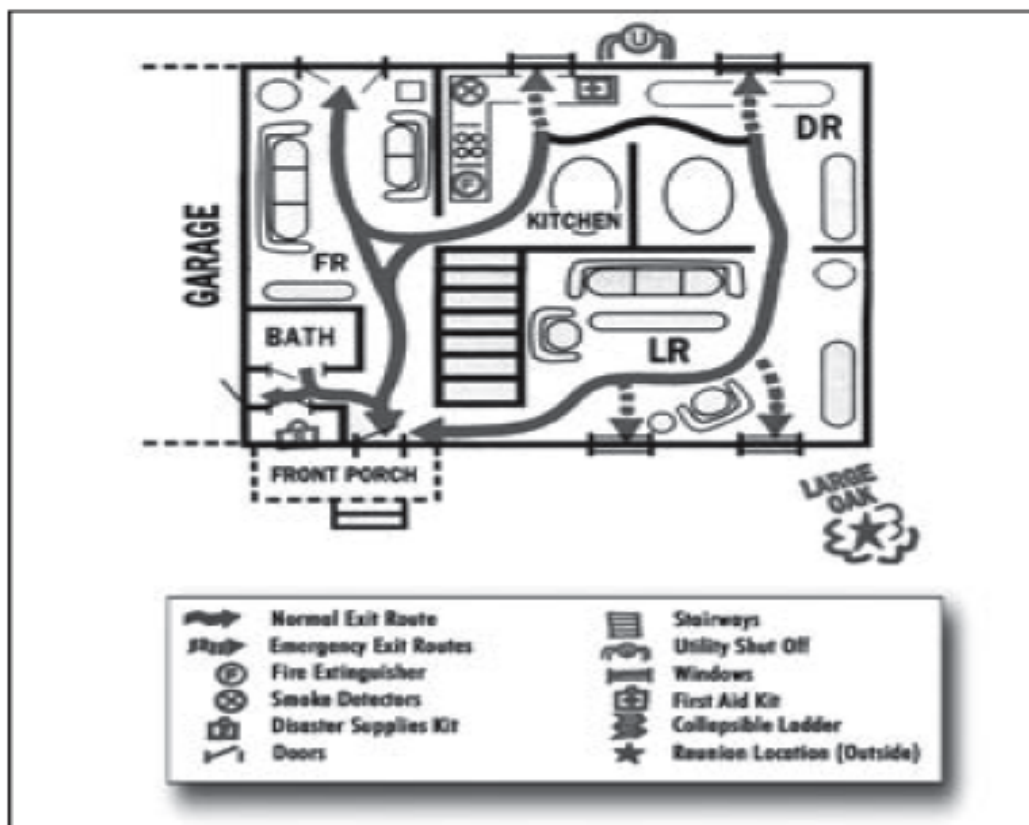


- ♦ **Meet with Your Family Members.** Review the information you gathered about community hazards and plans. Explain the dangers to children and work with them as a team to prepare your family. Be sure to include caregivers in your meeting and planning efforts.
- ♦ **Choose an "Out-of-Town" Contact.** Ask an out-of-town friend or relative to be your contact. Following a disaster, family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know the contact's phone numbers. After a disaster, it is often easier to make a long distance call than a local call from a disaster area.
- ♦ **Decide Where to Meet.** In the event of an emergency, you may become separated from family members. Choose a place right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire. Choose a location outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- ♦ **Complete a Family Communication Plan.** Your plan should include contact information for family members, work and school. Your plan should also include information for your out-of-town contact, meeting locations, emergency services and the National Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222). A sample form for recording this information can be found at www.ready.gov - or at www.redcross.org/contactcard. These websites also provide blank wallet cards on which contact information can be recorded and carried in a wallet, purse, backpack, etc., for quick reference. Teach your children how to call the emergency phone numbers and when it is appropriate to do so. Be sure each family member has a copy of your communication plan and post it near your telephone for use in an emergency.
- ♦ **Escape Routes and Safe Places.** In a fire or other emergency, you may need to evacuate on a moment's notice. Be ready to get out fast. Be sure everyone in your family knows the best escape routes out of your home as well as where the safe places are in your home for each type of disaster (i.e., if a tornado approaches, go to the basement or the lowest floor of your home or an interior room or closet with no windows).

Use a blank sheet of paper to draw floor plans of your home. Show the location of doors, windows, stairways, large furniture, your disaster supplies kit, fire extinguisher, smoke alarms, collapsible ladders, first-aid kits, and utility shut-off points. Show important points outside such as garages, patios, stairways, elevators, driveways, and porches. See illustration below.

Indicate at least two escape routes from each room, and mark a place outside of the home where household members should meet in case of fire. If you or someone in your household uses a wheelchair, make all exits from your home wheelchair accessible.

Practice emergency evacuation drills at least two times a year, but as often as you update your escape plan.





- **Plan for those with disabilities and other special needs.** Keep support items in a designated place, so they can be found quickly. For those who have home-health caregivers, particularly for those who are bed-bound, it is essential to have an alternate plan if the home-health caregiver cannot make it to you. In advance, provide the power company with a list of all power-dependent life support equipment required by family members. Develop a contingency plan that includes an alternate power source for the equipment or relocating the person.
- **Plan for your pets.** Take your pets with you if you evacuate. However, be aware that pets (other than service animals) usually are not permitted in emergency public shelters for health reasons. Prepare a list of family, friends, boarding facilities, veterinarians, and “pet-friendly” hotels that could shelter your pets in an emergency.
- **Prepare for different hazards.** Include in your plan how to prepare for each hazard that could impact your local community and how to protect yourself. For instance, the actions you would take to protect yourself from a tornado are different from those you would for a fire. Reference the websites listed on the back cover to learn more about the different actions required for different hazards.

☐ **Utilities**

Know how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches or valves and share this information with your family and caregivers. Keep any tools you will need near gas and water shut off valves. Turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged, you suspect a leak or if local officials instruct you to do so.

(Note: Gas shut-off procedure - As part of the learning process, do not actually turn off the gas. If the gas is turned off for any reason, only a qualified professional can turn it back on. It might take several weeks for a professional to respond. In the meantime, you will require alternate sources to heat your home, make hot water, and cook.)

☐ **Fire Extinguisher**

Be sure everyone knows how to use your fire extinguishers (ABC type) and where they are kept.

☐ **Smoke Alarms**

Install smoke alarms on each level of your home, especially near the bedrooms. Individuals with sensory disabilities should consider installing smoke alarms that have strobe lights and vibrating pads. Follow local codes and manufacturer's instructions about installation requirements. Also, consider installing a carbon monoxide alarm in your home.

☐ **Insurance Coverage**

Check if you have adequate insurance coverage. Homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage and may not provide full coverage for other hazards. Talk with your insurance agent and make sure you have adequate coverage to protect your family against financial loss.

☐ **First Aid/CPR & AED (Automated External Defibrillation)**

Take American Red Cross first aid and CPR/AED classes. Red Cross courses can accommodate people with disabilities. Discuss your needs when registering for the classes.





☐ **Inventory Home Possessions**

Make a record of your possessions to help you claim reimbursement in case of loss or damage. Store this information in a safe deposit box or other secure (flood/fire safe) location to ensure the records survive a disaster. Include photographs or video of the interior and exterior of your home as well as cars, boats and recreational vehicles. Also, have photos of durable medical equipment and be sure to make a record of the make and model numbers for each item. Get professional appraisals of jewelry, collectibles, artwork, or other items that may be difficult to evaluate. Make copies of receipts and canceled checks showing the cost for valuable items.

☐ **Vital Records and Documents**

Vital family records and other important documents such as birth and marriage certificates, social security cards, passports, wills, deeds, and financial, insurance, and immunizations records should be kept in a safe deposit box or other safe location.

☐ **Reduce Home Hazards**

In a disaster, ordinary items in the home can cause injury and damage. Take these steps to reduce your risk.

- ♦ Have a professional repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections.
- ♦ Place large, heavy objects on lower shelves and hang pictures and mirrors away from beds.
- ♦ Use straps or other restraints to secure tall cabinets, bookshelves, large appliances (especially water heater, furnace, and refrigerator), mirrors, shelves, large picture frames, and light fixtures to wall studs.
- ♦ Repair cracks in ceilings and foundations.
- ♦ Store weed killers, pesticides, and flammable products away from heat sources.
- ♦ Place oily rags or waste in covered metal cans and dispose of them according to local regulations.
- ♦ Have a professional clean and repair chimneys, flue pipes, connectors, and gas vents.

SEPTEMBER 9 & 10: National Preparedness Month - CERT Weekend

September is **National Preparedness Month**. As CERTs you understand the necessity of remaining prepared for any type of emergency. To maintain the skills of our Connecticut CERTs we will have a **CERT Weekend** on the weekend of September 9th and 10th at the Connecticut Fire Academy in Windsor Locks. The event will occur from 8:00 a.m. till 4 p.m. All Connecticut CERTs are invited to attend and practice some of the skills that they learned in CERT training. Chief Elected Officials, Board of Education Members, and all CERT members are invited to attend.

CERT activities will include Fire Extinguisher use, Cribbing, Triage, Kid's Safety House (Train-the-Trainer), Home Safety Check Training and a Maze Confidence Course. Saturday morning, Detective Pat Chagnon from the Office of Domestic Terrorism will talk about "*Operation Safeguard*." This is a public outreach program designed to generate public awareness within private industry and sectors by providing descriptions of potential terrorist indicators and suspicious activities and its effect on our lifestyle. Haley Rich, another guest speaker will talk about the *Teen SERT program* and will give a demonstration on Moulage Techniques. We have purchased four Moulage Kits that will be used for the demonstration on how to make your team members look really injured. At the completion of the moulage demonstrations, class participants will be entered in a drawing and four winners will take home the used moulage kits if they like, (State employees who are participating in the training in their official capacities are not eligible to win). Sunday afternoon, the guest speakers will be Dr. Peter S. Conserva (V.M.D.) and Dr. Arnie Goldman (D.M.V.) from the *CT SART (Connecticut State Animal Response Team)*. They will give an informative presentation about planning, preparation, recovery, rescue, standard operating and safety procedures involving animals.

A light breakfast and a lunch will be provided for those attending. The activities will be repeated on both days, to ensure that as many of our CERTs can attend as possible.

Location: Connecticut Fire Academy, 34 Perimeter Road, Windsor Locks, CT
8 AM - 4 PM

Contact: Sharon G. Mazzochi

Email: sharon.mazzochi@po.state.ct.us

Phone: (860)706-5517



Upcoming Training & Exercise

September 5	Critical Incident Management Training—POSTC
September 7	ICS 700—morning and afternoon sessions—East Hartford
September 8	ICS 700—morning and afternoon sessions—East Hartford
Sept. 11—15	Terrorism Liaison Officer training—POSTC
September 18	ICS-100—East Hartford
September 19	ICS-100—East Hartford
Sept. 23 & 30	CERT Train the Trainer—2 day course—Brainard Field, Hartford

For training and exercise questions please contact Bob Christ at 860-706-5519, Bob Scata at 860-706-5518, or Sharon Mazzochi at 860-706-5517.

*Please note—these are new numbers. The Training office has been moved to Brainard Field, 269 Maxim Road, Hartford, CT.

Training is critical for first responders and is readily available through the State Fire Academy, Regional Fire Schools, and the Police Officers Training Academy. First responders include Police, Fire, Public Works, Education and 911 dispatchers to name but a few.

All of the following organizations have the ability to deliver **NIMS training** to your police officers, firefighters, public works employees, 911 dispatchers, health workers, education staff and emergency management personnel. Training can be delivered weekdays, weekends or evenings to meet your needs. The NIMS program can be delivered in four, eight or twelve hour modules depending on the duties assigned to personnel.

You should also know that these programs are available on line at FEMA's web site:
http://www.fema.gov/tab_education.shtm

Training Facility Contact Information:

Police Officers Training Council	203-238-6505
Connecticut Fire Academy	860-627-6363
Eastern CT Fireman's Training School	860-487-1105
New Haven Regional Fire Academy	203-946-6215
Wolcott Fire School	203-879-1559
Hartford County Fire School	860-828-3242
Burrville Fire Training School	860-482-7496
Valley Fire Training School	203-736-6222
Middlesex County Fire School	860-663-1308
Fairfield Fireman's Training School	203-254-4709
Stamford Regional Training Fire School	203-977-4673

All State Agencies should contact the Training Unit at DEMHS.



Kerry Flaherty

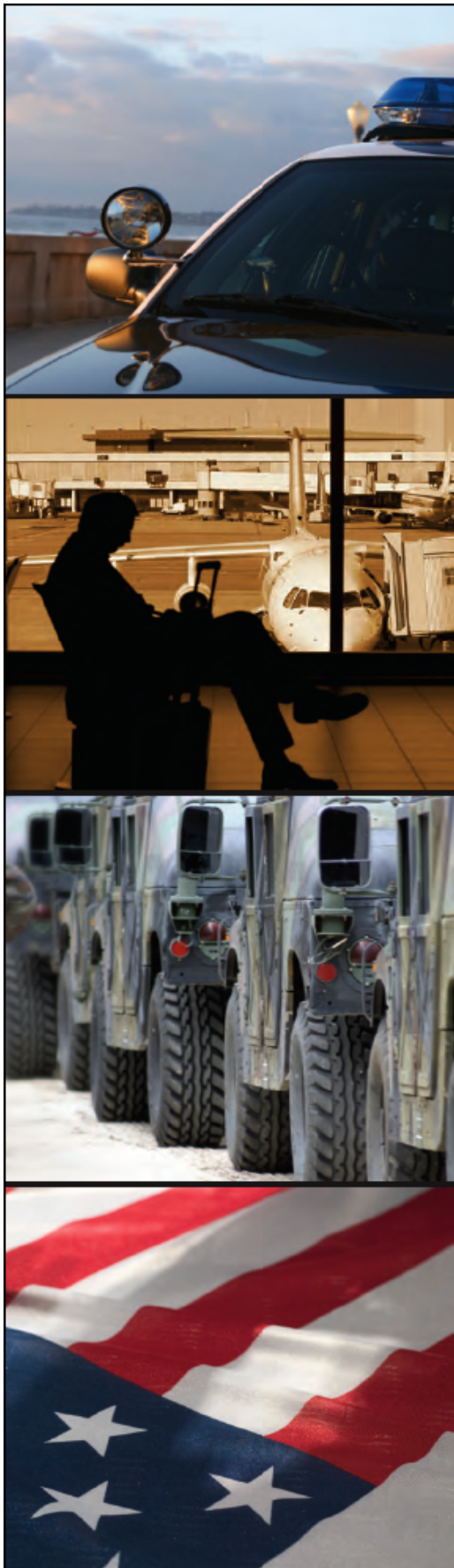
Director—Emergency Management & Homeland Security

Kerry Flaherty has resigned as the Director of the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security effective August 23, 2006. Kerry came to Emergency Management in 2001 to assist in the Homeland Security Grants Program and was instrumental in writing Connecticut's original Strategic Plan. He was also a principal in the development of Connecticut's Mass Decontamination Plan.

In 2003, Kerry was appointed by then Governor Rowland to be the Director of Emergency Management. He was re-appointed by Governor Rell in July, 2005. As Director, Kerry oversaw the consolidation of OEM into DEMHS, managed the state's response to TopOff 3, and oversaw a major renovation of the State EOC. In addition Kerry was able to revise and update the state's two major plans, the Consequence management Plan and the Natural Disaster Plan, which Governor Rell signed in January 2006.

Kerry worked tirelessly for Emergency Management and will be missed. We wish him well in all his new endeavors.





When you think about the threat of a terrorist attack, what concerns you most?

We want to hear from you.

Join us for a discussion and practical advice.

Tune in for

On Alert

Connecticut's Response

A live town meeting broadcast

**Tuesday, September 26 at 9 p.m.
On CPTV**

Panelists include James M. Thomas, commissioner of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, and Murray J. Pendleton, chief of police for the town of Waterford.

Viewers can participate by calling 1-800-842-2788 during the live broadcast of On Alert: Connecticut's Response.

On Alert: Connecticut's Response is a CPTV Connecting Our Communities initiative produced in partnership with the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security.

www.cptv.org

